

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1-22 were pending in this application. In the Office Action, the specification was objected to, and claims 1-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gebauer (U.S. Patent No. 6,446,117) in view of Hunter et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,223,172, hereinafter "Hunter"). Claim 22 was objected to as containing informalities. By the foregoing Amendment, claims 1, 7, and 14 have been amended to clarify the present invention. Further, claims 4 and 22 have been amended hereby to correct matters of form. Accordingly, claims 1-22 will be pending herein upon entry of this Amendment. Support for the amendment to the claims can be found, for example, at page 4, lines 12-18 of the present application. For the reasons stated below, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in this application are in condition for allowance.

The present invention involves managing transaction messages between computer systems. The present invention simplifies the management of transaction codes and their associated attributes by compressing the transaction types using masks. An action value is associated with each mask where each mask is a template that can be applied to more than one attribute. A distinguishing feature of the present invention as recited, for example, in amended Claim 1, is a transaction management system ("A system for managing transactions between a first computer system and a second computer system") where masks are used to reduce the number of entries used in a file to facilitate transaction management between computer systems

("wherein the management file contains a reduced number of transaction type-attribute strings with respect to a fully populated management file"). The mask structure, and the degree of compression provided, is dependent on the transaction requirements of the second computer system (page 8, lines 3-10).

Gebauer is directed to a method for providing access to database management systems. Gebauer discloses that a system stores variables from a first service request so that the variables can be retrieved for execution of a subsequent request (see Abstract). Gebauer does not teach or suggest managing transaction messages between computer systems.

Hunter is directed to a system and method for improving performance of computer networking by determining a destination address in an efficient manner. Specifically, Hunter provides an improved method to find a longest match search, where the longer the match of the entries of an IP address, the smaller the amount of possible destinations are required for a search (Column 1, lines 40-46 and column 2, lines 49-51). Hunter teaches a system and method to find a longest match by continuing to shorten a mask until a match is located (Column 3, lines 65-68, "a longest match for an address is located by progressively shortening a mask associated with the address until a matching forwarding database entry is found"); however, Hunter fails to teach or suggest a transaction management system as recited in Claim 1, where placement of a *fixed number of masks in a file is used to reduce the file size vis-à-vis* a conventional file structure ("wherein the management file contains a reduced number of transaction type-attribute strings with respect to a fully populated management file"). On the contrary, Hunter teaches a system for *continually modifying a mask* during a search process (See Abstract).

Moreover, whether taken singly or in combination, Gebauer and Hunter do not teach or fairly suggest a system for transaction management, as recited in Claim 1, wherein masks are used to reduce the size of a management file containing transaction tables "the management file contains a reduced number of transaction type-attribute strings."

A distinguishing feature of the present invention, as recited in amended Claim 7, includes a method for improving the response to a transaction request by using masks to reduce the size of a transaction management data structure. For the reasons stated above, whether taken singly or in combination, Gebauer and Hunter fail to teach or fairly suggest the method of the present invention recited in Claim 7 of "creating a management file containing at least one transaction type attribute string having a masked format and a corresponding action value , wherein the management file contains a reduced number of transaction type-attribute strings with respect to a fully populated management file").

Amended Claim 14 recites features of a system for managing computer transactions, including a process that modifies a response to a request from a first computer ("a process, which when executing on the gateway computer, takes a transaction request from the first computer system"), where the modified response is based on a table whose size is reduced using a mask format for table entries ("reformats the response transaction into a format the first computer can process, at least a portion of the response transaction being based on a table having one or more transaction type-attribute strings having a mask format, wherein the table contains a reduced number of transaction type-attribute strings with respect to a fully populated table"). As discussed above, neither Gebauer nor Hunter, taken singly or together, teach or suggest a system

where a formatted response to a computer request is based on a reduced-size table containing masked format entries ("a table having one or more transaction type-attribute strings having a mask format, wherein the table contains a reduced number of transaction type-attribute strings with respect to a fully populated table"). Accordingly, Applicants submit that, upon entry of the present Amendment, Claims 1, 7 and 14 will be in condition for allowance. Moreover, at least for their dependence on allowable claims, the remaining claims should be in allowable condition.

In view of the foregoing all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

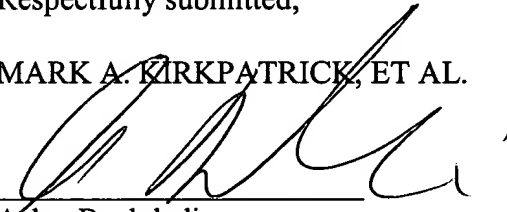
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